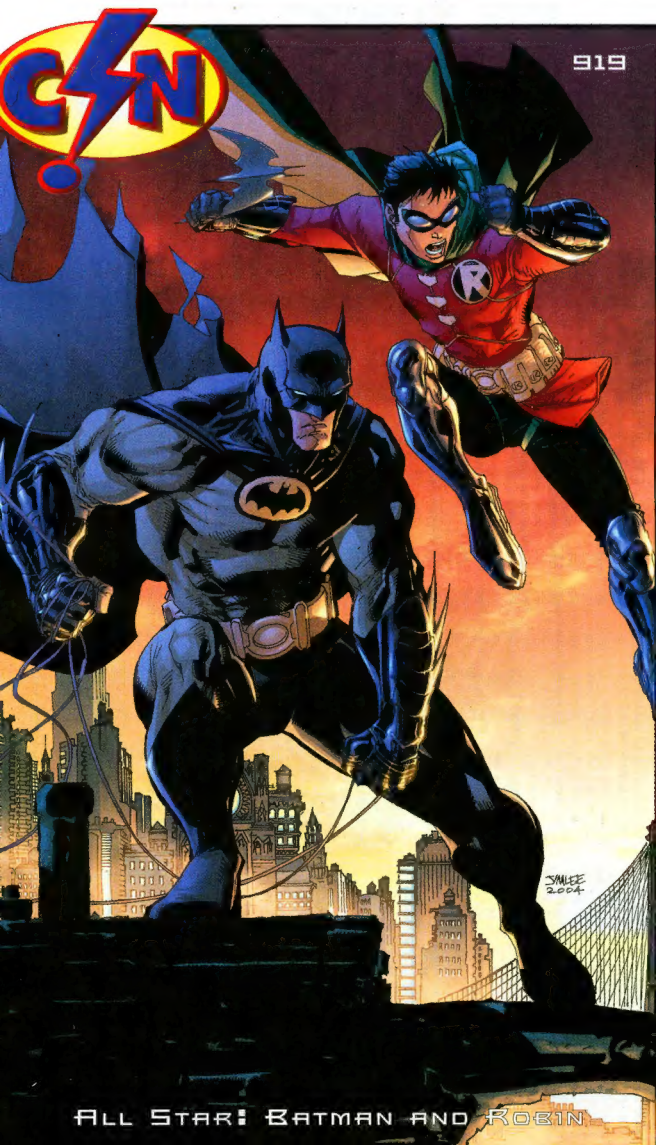




MILLER & LEE: BATMAN'S ALL-STAR

When CSN told you about DC's upcoming *All-Star* *Batman* and *Frank Miller & Robin*, we told you that DC was going to surprise everyone when they unveiled their mystery writer who'd be joining *Jim Lee* on the *Batman* and *Robin* title.

Prepare to be surprised.

DC has enlisted none other than superstar *Frank Miller* to supply the story for *All-Star: Batman & Robin*; this will mark Miller's first *Batman* project since 2001's *The Dark Knight Strikes Again* (and his first DCU *Batman* series since "Batman: Year One" way back in 1987), and *Jim Lee*'s first *Batman* work since he wrapped up "Hush" in 2003.

"If there was one creator I wanted to work with when I was a fan, it would have been *Frank Miller*," Lee said, "so after this project, I think I'm going to be ready to retire! Seriously, it will be the pinnacle of my career so far, and I can't wait to get started. Frank and I have had a couple of meetings about the story, and it's going to rock!"

So what's the focus of the story? "This is Dick Grayson's initiation and he's dealing with a very stern teacher," Miller explained. "Batman is a hard teacher—unforgiving. Brutal. At the same time, Grayson is watching *Batman* come into his full power. Me and *Jim Lee* get to play with all of DC's toys. It'll be a romp. It'll be a lot of fun. I plan on raiding DC's treasury of characters. There won't be a Black Canary or a Wonder Woman unused."

"This is quite an honor and, needless to say, a fairly daunting task that DC has bestowed upon me by handing me the helm of *All-Stars*," Group Editor *Bob Schreck* said. "Being able to help these incredibly talented creators bring their amazing tales to life on the comics page is going to be one heck of a ride, no doubt. I can't wait until the readers get to see what's in store for them."

Dan DiDio, VP - Executive Editor, DCU, who played a major role in constructing the *All-Star* line (and yes, it is a line—other books are already in the works to join the previously announced *Superman* and *Batman and Robin* titles), knew that Miller was the man for the job. "Frank was instrumental in redefining *Batman* for a new generation, and I, for one, can't wait to see him bring that same level of clarity and interpretation to *Dick Grayson* and *Robin*. With the teams now set for the two *All-Star* books, *Batman and Robin* and *Superman*, everyone should agree that they meet the expectations set for these series: *All Star* creators working on iconic versions of our *All Star* characters—it doesn't get much better than this!"

In case you've forgotten, the first two *All-Star* titles offer a chance for veteran readers and newcomers alike to experience these characters as the icons they have become all around the world. These are not continuity reboots, nor are they tied to current DCU continuity. Instead, the creators are telling stories set in a contemporary period that both builds on the histories of the respective characters, while remaining fresh and as timeless as possible. These are books that DC hopes, will pull people in who maybe haven't read a *Batman* or *Superman* story in a while—if ever.

These versions and stories, rather than being simplified or "dumbed down," will bring to the page what's pure about the character—the iconic characteristics. People who know from *Dick Grayson* is *Robin* won't have to try to figure out who *Tim Drake* is, or why *Dick Grayson* now lives in *Blüdhaven*, where he's been a policeman. All the core story elements that have become a part of the popular culture collective unconscious are here, restored to their elemental glory.

Jim Lee has been quite up-front about his enthusiasm for this project. On his blog, Lee wrote, "To say this is my ultimate, dream project would be an incredible understatement. Back when I was in college from 1982 to 1986, I grew bored and disenchanted with comics, barely perusing my subscriptions when I went home for various holiday breaks. *Frank Miller* changed all that in 1986 when *The Dark Knight Returns* blew my mind and lit up my retinas. I haven't been the same since."

"My passion for creating comics comes from this one book, and I've embarrassed Frank countless times by repeating this exact same story to him. Being fortunate enough to have as passionate fans, I know how it feels to be told similar tales, so I hold back and try and act normal around him now so I don't freak him out."

"Years ago after *DC* purchased *WildStorm*, when I was approached by *Denny O'Neil* of the *Bat* office to do something *Batman* related, I was asked who I wanted to work with and of course, Frank was the first answer," Lee explained. "It took some incredible circumstances and many years but the

patience will be worth it. In fact, I think I can do an infinitely better job of tackling a *Frank Miller* script now than say, six years ago. This is the project I have been training for my entire professional career, if not my entire fan career."

"I was a huge *Miller* fan back on his original *Daredevil* run and it just snowballed from there like it did for 95% of the fans out there. His work was always so inventive, his characters so emotionally conflicted and torn, and his storytelling was to die for. Who can forget the pathos and respectability he brought to once laughable characters like the *Kingpin*? The *X-Men* were my favorite characters, but *Frank Miller* was the creator I admired most, the creator who kept rewriting the rules and astonishing everyone along the way."

"Knowing that Frank is an incredible storytelling and artist with strongly defined takes on his characters...of course, it goes without saying that second guessing is gonna try and creep in there. But I completely up for the challenge. I may have wilted ten years ago, but I think my years of experience will carry me through on this one. In fact, I look forward to the pressure cooker; I feed off of the pressure."

In fact, every single artist who has worked with Frank has emerged a better artist, a better storyteller, a better writer for the experience and I can't say how much anxious I am—in a good way—to have everything I know be torn apart and rebuilt from the ground up. This is how I have fun on a project, and I wouldn't have it any other way.

"With Frank, we can talk just in visuals. When he describes scenes, I can see or rather imagine how it would look if he were to draw it, and then decide whether to play to that or go off in a different direction visually..."



While Lee has already completed a one-year "Hush" run that some have described as the quintessential *Batman* story, Lee had no doubt that he wanted to return to the character. "I don't think you ever need an excuse to work on *Batman*, who is arguably the greatest character of the modern age. That being said, there are a ton of other DCU characters we haven't seen *Batman* interact with—and if we do half the stuff Frank told me he had planned, I think fans have no worry in feeling any sense of *déjà vu*. Expect a lot of super-powered gals to be popping up, as well as other half-cocked vigilante types." One thing that Lee definitely didn't want to do, however, was to repeat himself creatively. "I think *Batman* and *Robin* will let me approach the *Batman* myths with a fresh new take, simply by virtue of working with a visionary like Frank."

Lee describes *All-Star: Batman and Robin* as "a fresh start to the classic myths; civilians and casual readers will dig it immediately and long time fans will love the new nuggets and gems Frank unearths as he takes on the *Dark Knight* once more. It's the *Batman* we all know and love, seen with a contemporary point of view... It might be best to look at it as 'Batman: Year Two' in the *Millerverse* of *Batman*. I assume it will feed off what Frank set up with 'Year One' years ago and set up themes which will resonate with those seen in *Dark Knight Returns* and *Dark Knight Strikes Again*."



It's a fresh examination of the complex relationship between *Batman* and *Robin*, *Wayne* and *Grayson*."

Lee sees the new series as being "aimed squarely at casual readers. Browsers who have never read a *Batman* comic but are familiar with the character from other media should be able to pick up *All Star: Batman and Robin* and get 'it' right from the start. We have a big opportunity this year with the behemoth that is *Batman Begins* launching in June, and all the mainstream press and attention comics have been enjoying of late. The *All-Star* line should be ready to capitalize on the eventual interest. Frank also promises some very visceral, in-your-face storytelling and action with several twists and turns to the classic *Batman* and *Robin* mythology so I think long time fans will be pleasantly rewarded as well."

Batman Begins is slated to debut in June; *All Star: Batman and Robin* should follow a month later. "This is all by design. We have known about the scheduling for the movie for some time," Lee said. "Moreover, a lot of this kind of activity has to be planned way in advance given the size and scope of the marketing involved in a tentpole movie like *Batman Begins*. We want *Batman* and *Robin* to be there when *Batman* fans are hungry for more *Batman*."

In deciding what look to give the characters, Lee drew on the visions of a number of talented people to help provide guidance. "I had a lot of input from people at DC as well as some key suggestions from *Alex Ross*," Lee said. "In my mind, the original costumes are near perfect so it was a daunting task trying to update and customize the designs."

Of course, Lee has many more characters than just *Batman* and *Robin* to work with, since Miller's story has a small superheroic army of guest-stars. Don't look for radical reworkings to be the order of the day, though. "I think it will be as classic as can be with more tweaking as we go further down the icon list. Those C and D-list heroes can expect more drastic makeovers but when it comes to characters like *Black Canary*—it's got to be a short leather jacket and fishnets all the way. I will be getting to draw the characters with the maximum amount of creative freedom but 90% of the time, I will be defaulting to their original, classic look."

How long have Miller and Lee signed up for? "I'm signed on for as many as Frank wants to do," Lee said. "Six is the minimum commitment. Seeing how stories can sometimes grow in the telling, I think it would be premature to say exactly how long the story will run."

And no doubt comic readers are already making plans to be in the audience for this history-making run when it debuts in July.

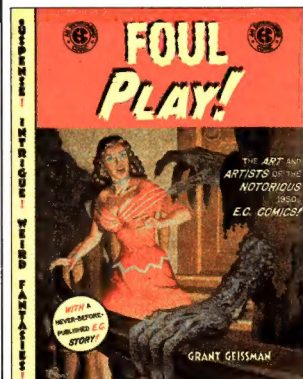
BY CLIFF BIGGERS & MATT BRADY

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

FAIR IS FOUL AND FOUL IS FAIR...

Fans, critics, and comics historians rarely view the same works as among comics most fair—but one line that ranks up there with the fairest of them all is the legendary EC Comics. It's hard to believe that EC as we know it lasted less than a half-decade—and it's even harder to believe that it's been a half a century since their last books were published! Now *Grant Geissman* is taking a look at this short-lived but groundbreaking line in *Foul Play! The Art and Artists of the Notorious 1950's EC Comics!*

Rather than simply chronicling EC's history, Geissman has chosen to spotlight the men who brought the stories to life, offering profiles of the careers and creations of such comics giants as *Johnny Craig*, *Reed Crandall*, *Jack Davis*, *Will Elder*, *Al Feldstein*, *Graham Ingels*, *Jack Kamen*, *Bernard Kravitz*, *Harvey Kurtzman*, *Joe Orlando*, *John Severin*, *Al Williamson*, and *Wally Wood*, following their careers up to and beyond their EC years. In addition, Geissman complements each profile chapter with a classic EC tale illustrated by the creator. If that's not enough, here's the real kicker: Geissman has added a never-before-published story, "Wanted for Murder!" that was originally scheduled for publication in 1956 but vanished into the archives when the company shut down. The book also includes a selection of rarely seen EC Christmas Party art.



"Legendary publisher *Bill Gaines* is perhaps best remembered as the founder of *Mad Magazine*," HarperDesign publicity manager *Gretchen Crary* said, "but in the opinion of many dedicated comic book fans, his greatest achievement was EC Comics, a line of adventure, horror, and science fiction comics whose influence on American graphic novels is undeniable, even today. *Foul Play!* is the perfect book for anyone wanting to understand the special place EC holds in the comic fan's heart—or who just wants to read some really good comics!"

Foul Play!, a full-color trade paperback, is scheduled for early March release.

THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE NIL

Nihilists and frustrated existentialists, take heart—Slave Labor feels your alienation! Even better, they've joined forces with creator *James Turner* to offer a 232-page graphic novel that explores that very theme!

Nil is the story of Proun Nil, a Camus-esque hero on a quest to "find meaning in a desolate world saturated with angst and ennui," according to the folks at Slave Labor. So what breaks him out of the confines of his humdrum existence? A false murder charge, that's what—a charge that strips away all the trappings of his former life and sends him on an odyssey through alienation and into hope. The publisher describes the graphic novel as "a concoction of fiction and intrigue that delves into the bleak and bitter philosophical brew of Nihilist chic," but it's the pictures that speak much more powerfully than these descriptive words—and Turner minimalist, mechanical backgrounds and sepulchral figures have an awful lot to say!

Nil is scheduled for mid-April release.

INS & OUTS

INS *Peter David*, who will continue as *Incredible Hulk* writer for at least the remainder of 2005, and possibly longer. David reported on Fanboy Radio that he's also working on an Abomination four-issue limited series and an as-yet-unnamed ongoing series for Marvel that will debut in September.

OUTS *Fallen Angel*, which David said was slated for cancellation after #20, the second part of his *Sachs & Viols* guest-starring story arc. David suggested that if every fan of his book would buy one extra copy, that might send enough of a message to keep the title around...



INS *Phenix: Endsong #1*, which will go into a second printing the satisfy unmet demand for the *Greg-Land*-illustrated series. The new edition will feature a variant cover featuring *Jean Grey* in her green costume. It should be in comic shops at about the same time as this issue of CSN.

OUT Dreamwave Entertainment, best known to readers as the publisher of a plethora of *Transformers* titles, has ceased operations effective immediately. Other companies are negotiating with Hasbro for the *Transformers* license, but no word yet on who might land this retro-toy-tie-in jewel.

INS *Natalie Portman* is in the starring role in the film version of *V for Vendetta*... *Kate Bosworth* is set to star as *Lois Lane* in the upcoming *Superman* film... and *Kevin Spacey* has signed on as *Lex Luthor* in the same film.

BEHIND EVERY SILVER ST. CLOUD IS A DARK LINING...

After a quarter century break, *Batman's* love life is about to get complicated...

Silver St. Cloud, *Batman's* love interest from the late 1970's, is coming back this spring—and so are her creators!

In case you've forgotten, St. Cloud was the creation of *Steve Englehart*, *Marshall Rogers*, *Terry Austin*, & *John Workman*, who introduced her during the brilliant but all-too-short-lived run on *Detective Comics* #s 471-476. (collected in the trade paperback *Batman: Strange Apparitions*). And now, Englehart has confirmed in his e-mail newsletter that the entire creative team is reuniting for *Batman: Dark Detective*, a six-issue biweekly miniseries that Englehart describes as a "volume two" to their classic run.

Englehart and company's story hit high gear quickly, re-introducing *Hugo Strange* (previously seen in *Batman* #1) and *Deadshot*, while also spotlighting a collection of memorable characters including *Boss Rupert Thorne*, the *Joker*, the *Penguin*, and one of *Bruce Wayne's* classic love interests, *Silver St. Cloud* (who came to the realization that *Wayne* and *Batman* were the same man on her own). The run of the full team ended



with a two-part story, which began with "Laughing Fish" in the now-legendary *Detective* #475 and ended in #476, "Sign of the Joker!" (Rogers remained on the title for three more issues, providing a framing sequence for a *Neal Adams* reprint story in #477, and illustrating *Len Wein's* introduction of *Clayface III* in #478-479.)

Dark Detective, which will run from May through July, will feature, according to Englehart, the return of *Silver St. Cloud*, as well as the *Joker* and, "first appearances (by us) of *Two-Face*, the *Scarecrow*, and, uh, *Dr. Double X*," Englehart explained. "Silver's moved on, and the last thing she wants to do is meet *Bruce Wayne* again—but fate, you know... And the *Joker* is running for governor with a simple slogan: "Vote for me or I'll kill you."

"My goal, in accepting this, was to do something as good as, but not the same as, the first run. Word from DC is, they think we did. (Confidentially, I think so, too. *Marshall and Terry's* art is spectacular, and it was a thrill for me to get back to a character and situation I had so much fun with the first time...). If this sounds interesting to you, please let your local retailer know. As you're probably aware, in the current age of comics, retailers want to know what potential interest is in a new title so they can order enough (but not too many, of course)—so your expression of interest will help ensure not only that you'll get a

copy come May, but that your friends will get one, too!

"Finally—as many of you know, I no longer hype projects I'm doing until they're in the can... but I will just mention that based on the inhouse response to *Dark Detective*, I've been asked to do a similar project with some other heroes I've had some success with there. So maybe later this year, if you want it, you'll get another one of these emails..."

A LEGEND PASSES WILL EISNER DIES

On January 3rd, 2005, the comics field lost perhaps its most prolific and acclaimed comics auteur when *Will Eisner* passed away at the age of eighty-seven due to complications from quadruple bypass heart surgery.

When *Comic Shop News* saw the release of its first issue in 1987, *Will Eisner* was a comics veteran with more than a half-century-long body of work to his credit. When the direct market was born in the early 1970s, Eisner had been blazing new creative trails for almost forty years. When the *Marvel Age* began in 1961, Eisner had a quarter-century's creative output behind him. When the *Silver Age* began in the mid-1950s, Eisner had been producing comics material for two decades. When the *Golden Age* ended in the late 1940s, Eisner was one of its veterans with ten years' experience. When *Superman* first debuted in the pages of *Action Comics* in 1938, Eisner had been working for two years as the creator of his own comic strips. Eisner's career not only predated comics, it embodied it; Eisner personified the boundless energy that has driven the art form for more than sixty-five years.

Today, we hear the occasional story of the teenaged young Turk who breaks into comics—but Eisner outdid all of them, entering the field as a teenager in 1936 and promptly falling in love with the medium... a love affair that continued for almost seventy years. In a field where many creators struggle to produce a dozen pages a month, Eisner produced tens of thousands of pages of comics material... and he never left, continuing to produce outstanding material up until the very end of his life.

Eisner was one of our field's best and brightest—a superlative talent, an astute business man, an intellect of diverse interests, and an articulate and gifted spokesman for the art form. In a field in which the phrase "end of an era" is overused to the point of thoughtless cliché, his passing truly is the end of an era—sequential art's last unflagging creative pioneer has passed on, and the field will never know another like him.

"The world has lost a true original, a constant innovator, and a prolific and powerful storyteller who created till the end," *Denis Kitchen*, Eisner's literary and art agent, said in DC Comics' statement that followed Eisner's passing. "On a personal level, I have lost a mentor, and a surrogate father. There will never be anything like him."

Eisner's contributions to *Wow, What a Magazine* were published when he was still a teenager in 1936 and he was at the forefront of the



birth of the comic book industry in the 1930s. From 1936 to 1939 Eisner partnered with Samuel "Jerry" Iger to run the Eisner & Iger Studio, providing a steady supply of content to publishers at the onset of the comic book industry. The Eisner & Iger staff included such future luminaries as Jack Kurtzberg (later Jack Kirby), Lou Fine, Bob Kane, Mort Meskin, and many others. While partnered with Iger, Eisner created Sheena, Queen of the Jungle, followed by Dollman, Blackhawk and other characters.

In 1940, Eisner sold his interest in the packaging house to Iger and went on to create his most famous character, The Spirit, a masked crimefighter. The Spirit was the lead feature in an unprecedented new format: a sixteen-page color comic book that was inserted in Sunday newspapers, the first of numerous Eisner innovations. At the height of its popularity, The Spirit insert appeared in twenty newspapers with a combined circulation of 5 million readers each Sunday, quintupling the circulation of America's best-selling monthly comic book.

The Spirit has been called "The Citizen Kane of comics" by *USA Today*, and Eisner's achievement remains a benchmark in the industry. Art Spiegelman said of the series, "The Spirit still crackles with the energy of an artist consumed with the excitement of cascading new ideas. Inspired by the Hollywood noir movies of the period, Eisner brought something brand new into the world—not 'movies on paper' but picture-writing that keeps moving in your head."

The Spirit continued without Eisner's direct involvement while he served three years in World War II, producing educational cartoons and comic strips for the Army. After his discharge from the Army in 1945, Eisner returned to *The Spirit*, producing it till 1952 and reaching heights of artistic accomplishment that have drawn comparisons between *The Spirit* and the films of Alfred Hitchcock. Although Eisner "retired" the Spirit in 1952, the series has rarely been out of print since. The first comic book reprints were issued by Quality (from 1944-50), followed by Fiction House (1952-54), Harvey Comics (1966-67), Kitchen Sink Press (1973), Warren Publications (1974-76) and Kitchen Sink Press again (from 1977 to 1998). Since 2000, DC Comics has published fifteen volumes in the hardcover series *The Spirit Archives*, which is projected to run twenty-four volumes.

"As someone once said: Will was the D. W. Griffith of comics," *Spirit Archives* editor Dale Crain said. "And I think that comparison is so true. He developed their visual vocabulary; how panels can convey time, how a tight shot can focus on emotion, how a 'moving camera' or 'P.O.V.' can deliver so much more information, etc. And that is just the visual side. Eisner also brought an amazing amount of characterization and insight to not only his cast but, perhaps even more impressively, to the one-off characters that his stories grew to more and more revolve around."

"Will was a multi-faceted treasure," said Paul Levitz, the President & Publisher of DC Comics. "He was a pioneer as a cartoonist as well as a young entrepreneur at the dawn of comic books. He taught generations of creators in the studio, the classroom and by example. Best of all, to our delight as students and readers, he returned to the board to develop the nascent form of the graphic novel and establish himself as the cartoonist laureate of the immigrant Jewish experience in America. Any one of his accomplishments would be enough to honor a lesser lifetime; the sum of them, done by one man is astonishing. He was a friend, an advisor and an inspiration."

As a Pentagon-based Warrant Officer during World War II, Eisner pioneered the instructional use of comics. His combination of information with cartoon elements proved so effective that he continued to supply information in that form to audiences as diverse as the U.S. government and schools across America.

Perhaps Eisner's most lasting legacy is the creation of the graphic novel with his 1978 publication of *A Contract With God*. This book launched what is now the fastest-growing genre in American publishing. Eisner subsequently creat-



ed nearly twenty graphic novels, roughly a book per year, inspiring countless fellow professionals to follow his lead. His most recent graphic novel, *Fagin the Jew*, a reinterpretation of the character in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, was published in 2003 by Doubleday.

In May, 2005, W. W. Norton & Company will publish Eisner's new book, *The Plot: The Secret Story of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Eisner turned his attention to nonfiction with this project, producing his first book of history, a work more disturbing than fiction. He considered *The Plot* to be his most important project ever. Umberto Eco just completed an introduction to the book last week.

In addition, Norton has recently acquired world rights to the Will Eisner Library graphic novel backlog, comprising fourteen graphic novels, including the seminal *A Contract with God* along with *Dropsie Avenue*, *A Life Force*, *Name of the Game*, *The Heart of the Storm*, and others. Norton will begin publishing these graphic novels in a new format, with new material, in November of 2005.

Norton executive editor Robert Weil, Eisner's editor at Norton, said, "Will Eisner possessed a tremendous intuitive gift for storytelling, conveyed through the combination of art and words. Like a superb novelist, he could engage the reader and reveal the deepest life forces, both comic and tragic. Through his depiction of place, especially through his evocation of Depression-era life on one block in the Bronx, he was able to create an entire universe of experience. These unique gifts have lifted Eisner's work from the domain of low culture, where comics and comic novels were long relegated, to the realm of literary genius."

Eisner, who taught comics classes for years at the School of Visual Arts in New York City, has authored two definitive instructional books on the medium, *Comics and Sequential Art* and *Graphic Storytelling*. Both are perennial sellers.

One of the comics industry's two most prestigious awards, The Eisner, is named after him and presented annually before a packed ballroom at Comic-Con International: San Diego. Nominees are selected each year by a blue-ribbon committee, with winners selected by a vote of comics professionals. Will Eisner has modestly accepted several Eisner Awards over the years, as well as several Harvey's, named after his close friend, the late Harvey Kurtzman. In 2001 he made history again by winning separate awards for works created sixty years apart, with *The Spirit Archives Volume 1* winning "Best Reprint" with material originally published in 1940, while his *Last Day in Vietnam*, published in 2000, won "Best Graphic Novel." Eisner has also won numerous international awards.

In May 2002 *Wizard* magazine named Will Eisner "the most influential comics artist of all time." On June 3, 2002, Eisner received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Federation for Jewish Culture, only the second such honor in the organization's history, presented by Pulitzer-prize winning cartoonist Art Spiegelman. Two separate film documentaries about Eisner's career are underway.

Readers can learn more about Eisner's accomplishments by visiting the website of his literary agency at www.kitchenandnansen.com, or by visiting the site devoted to Eisner and his work, www.willeisner.com.

A TIRELESS TALENT

Will Eisner's career is far too diverse and his creations too numerous to be condensed into a small number of books. However, for readers who aren't familiar with his amazing body of work, here are a few works that serve as a starting point to Eisner's imaginative genius.

Life On Another Planet - Praised by many as the first true graphic novel rather than just a long-form comic book, this is the story of how humanity responds when faced with incontrovertible evidence of contact from an intelligent extraterrestrial race. "This was originally entitled *Signal From Space* and was an attempt to produce a graphic novel that was constructed in the same structure as a classic literary work," Eisner said. "By taking what would be a science-fiction plot and treating it from a more humanistic viewpoint I hoped to come up with a book that would deserve adult interest."

A Contract With God - An amazing semi-autobiographical look at the residents of a Bronx neighborhood in the 1930s, this powerful and sometimes poignant tale is an honest paean to a bygone era. Eisner vividly recreates the hardships and joys of his young life in this amazing work that inspired two sequels.

To the Heart of the Storm - Where *A Contract With God* was semi-autobiographical, *To the Heart of the Storm* is intensely, sometimes painfully, earnest in its look at Eisner's life. The former work focused on a place and a time; this work focuses intensely on the young Eisner, molded and shaped in the political, economic, and social furnaces of the era. "...Writing a self-revealing account of one's life takes considerable courage. It took me a year to produce," Eisner said. "At the end it turned out to be a period of deep therapy. I had to deal with untrustworthy memory and the residue of guilt about the fairness and accuracy of the portrayal of loved ones."

Fagin the Jew - Rather than let the stereotyped Jew as typified by Fagin stand unchallenged, Eisner chose to retell some of the events of *Oliver Twist* from Fagin's point of view, expanding on and enhancing the story as seen through Fagin's eyes, giving a stereotype the depth and complexity for which Eisner was acclaimed.

Last Day in Vietnam - Six short tales that offer an insider's view of the war experience. Eisner put in many years as a soldier and as a correspondent for *PS Magazine*, so he new a soldier's life; his understanding and appreciation of the soldier's experience shows through in every tale.

Spirit Archives Volume One - Showcasing the first six months of the series that made Eisner a comics legend, this volume introduces readers to Denny Colt and sets the lightheartedly adventurous tone that became Eisner's signature style for the strip.

Spirit Archives Volume Twelve - This volume marks Eisner's return to the US and to the Spirit strip after the end of WWII. The war matured Eisner as a storyteller, leading him to open up his storytelling and focus on an amazing cast of supporting characters, some of whom graduate to starring status in Eisner's moving short tales. "Other than character's first appearances, virtually all of Will's most memorable stories appeared in his post-war run," Spirit Archives editor Dale Crain told CSN.

Comics & Sequential Art - Not content to merely show how it should be done, Eisner chose to share his insights with everyone in this amazing text on comic book storytelling, allowing all of us a glimpse into the skilled mind of a comics master.

And demonstrating the tireless energy of creative genius, Eisner continued working almost to the very end, leaving several works in the pipeline to see print over the next few months. Upcoming is *Eisner/Miller*, a lengthy conversation between Eisner and Frank Miller on comics art and storytelling; *The Plot—the Secret Story of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a graphic novel exposing the real story of the anti-Jewish propaganda behind this fraudulent revelation of purported Jewish secrets; and a short story written and illustrated by Eisner for Michael Chabon *Presents The Amazing Adventures of The Escapist #6*, featuring the hitherto-untoled meeting of the Spirit and the Escapist.

Shortly before his death, Eisner was working on a final project that would have been of immeasurable benefit to future generations of comic book artists. "What was on Will's drawing board when he died was the third part of the instructional trilogy," his friend and agent Denis Kitchen said. "When I saw it in November, it was penciled and organized, but he still had quite a ways to go on it. It would have been called *Expressive Anatomy*, which would have completed what he was trying to show people over the years—how to make comics the Will Eisner way. It is conceivable that there might be enough in there that something could be put together by someone else—someone that Will would've trusted to handle it."

In Clarissa's family, nothing is uglier than a smile.

☆☆☆ 1/2
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 (Image DEC041513 \$3.50)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

Antoine Sharp is the man you call on as a last resort... the man who tackles the problems that no one else would dare to confront. He's the Atheist, and he operates in a world that God seems to have forgotten...

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

With *Constantine* bringing a chill to the big screen, what better time to introduce a new horror hero?

BATMAN: THE MAN WHO LAUGHED

ED BRUBAKER (W)
DOUG MAHNKE (A)
 (DC DEC040230 \$6.95; also available in a signed edition (DEC042589 \$39.99))

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

Learn hitherto-unrevealed details about the Dark Knight's first confrontation with the Clown Prince of Crime in this compelling prestige-format oneshot.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Brubaker's noir edginess and compelling characterization combine to create one seriously disturbing—and unforgettable—Joker.



BIGFOOT #1

STEVE NILES & ROB ZOMBIE (W)
RICHARD CORBEN (A)
 (IDW DEC042681 \$3.99)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

Human activity intrudes more deeply into the forests of the Pacific Northwest every year... and that doesn't make Bigfoot happy at all!

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Steve Niles & Rob Zombie hit another nail on the head with this tale of the cryptozoological proto-human—and they've enlisted horror legend Richard Corben to supply the visuals! How's that for a team?



BIZARRO WORLD HC

VARIOUS (W/A)
 (DC NOV040260 \$29.95)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

DC lets some of the most talented indy creators run wild in their playground, and the result is a new collection of delightfully offbeat DCU stories.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

There's an exuberance and vitality to these stories that's almost infectious; it's obvious that the creators are having a great time, and they're more than willing to share it with the audience.

BLACK PANTHER #1

REGINALD HUDDIN (W)
JOHN KOMITA JR. (A)
 (Marvel DEC041733 \$2.99)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

One of Lee & Kirby's most memorable creations from one of the most fertile eras of Fantastic Four history returns in this bold, energetic new series that marks filmmaker Reginald Hudlin's comic book debut. If you're not familiar with the Panther thus far, don't fret—this issue offers a new look at the character's origins as it lays the groundwork for this powerful series set in the Panther's African homeland.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Forget those revisionist reboots—this is the *real* Black Panther, returning to his roots in this A-team series.



BONE VOL 1: OUT OF BONEVILLE COLOR ED HC

JEFF SMITH (W/A)
 (Graphicx DEC042664 \$18.95)

BONE VOL 1: OUT OF BONEVILLE COLOR ED SC

JEFF SMITH (W/A)
 (Graphicx DEC042663 \$9.99)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

Jeff Smith's anthropomorphic epic is presented in full color at long last. This volume kicks off a comprehensive program to offer the entire saga in color, one book at a time.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Betcha thought that Jeff Smith couldn't surpass the *Bone One Volume Edition*, right? Looks like he proved us all wrong!...

BRIAN PULIDO'S MEDIEVAL LADY DEATH #1

BRIAN PULIDO (W)
DI AMORIM (A)
 (Avatar DEC042418 \$3.99)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

The reader-friendly fantasy-themed *Lady Death* relaunch that began at CrossGen continues in its new home at Avatar. Brian Pulido masterminds the same sort of engaging magical adventure that made the series so popular in its initial run—and he's even including a recap of the early CrossGen issues for readers who are just discovering Pulido's kinder, gentler *Lady Death*.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

A little less pulchritude and a little more plot make this the most readable of all the *Lady Death* series.

GREEN LANTERN: REBIRTH #5

GEOFF JOHNS (W)
ETHAN VAN SCOVER (A)
 (DC DEC040261 \$2.95)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

Hal Jordan's restoration to his rightful position as Earth's Green Lantern continues. But what's on store for Kyle Rayner, the current Green Lantern? Find out in this issue!



WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Four printings of the first issue... two printings of the second... Obviously we don't need to tell you why you should care about this series, 'cause you've already figured that out!

HUNTER KILLER #1

MARK WAID (W)
MARC SILVESTRI (A)

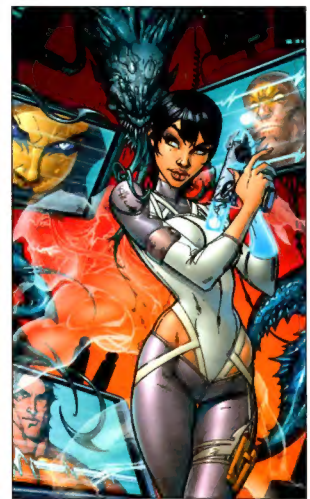
(Image DEC041570 \$2.99; also available in an alternate-cover edition (DEC042576 \$6.99) and a signed alternate cover edition (DEC042577 \$39.99))

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

Wolf and Ellis lead the Hunter-Killers, the world's last line of defense against paranormal threats... but these heroes operate out of the spotlight, ensuring that the world remains blissfully ignorant of the threats that they face. They're the ultimate covert-ops team, confronting the ultimate menaces.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

With Waid and Silvestri handling the creative honors, this book has two "marks" in its favor from the very beginning! And with a trio of all-star cover artists (Marc Silvestri, Trevor Hairsine, and J. Scott Campbell) providing the three covers, this one is sure to stand out on the comic shop racks.





JLA: CLASSIFIED #4

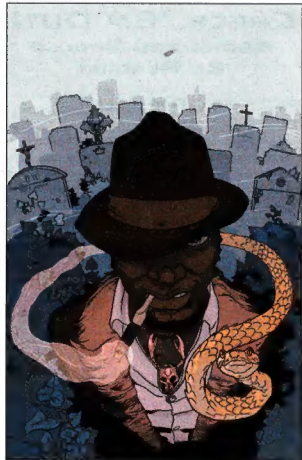
KEITH GIFFEN & J.M. DeMATTEIS
(W) KEVIN MAGUIRE
& JOSEF RUBINSTEIN (A)
(DC DEC040266 \$2.95)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

The "bwah-hah-hah" former Justice League returns in a zany new tale that picks up where *Formerly Known As the Justice League* left off. This light-hearted B-team misadventure (initially announced under the miniseries title *I Can't Believe It's Not the Justice League* before it got folded into *JLA: Classified* instead) even co-stars a pre-*Identity Crisis* (and thus still alive) Sue Dibny, which should appeal to those who've just rediscovered the DCU thanks to that compelling seven-part murder mystery.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

There's *always* a place for funny books in the funnybook industry, as Giffen, DeMatteis, Maguire, & Rubinstein so capably demonstrate.



JOHN CONSTANTINE HELLBLAZER SPECIAL: PAPA MIDNITE #1

MAT JOHNSON (W) &
TONY Akins & DAN GREEN (A)
(Vertigo/DC DEC040329 \$2.95)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

The hitherto-unrevealed origin of John Constantine's nemesis is revealed in this five-issue limited series that traces his roots from his current home in modern-day Harlem to his boyhood in colonial Manhattan some three centuries earlier. Hey, it takes a long time for an adversary this malevolent to develop his voodoo magics!

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

With Papa Midnite playing a major role in the *Constantine* film, there's bound to be a lot of interest in the background of this enigmatic character.



LEGEND #1

HOWARD CHAYKIN (W) &
RUSS HEATH (A)
(WildStorm/DC DEC040310 \$5.95)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

How Danner is a man with amazing abilities... but they don't necessarily make his life better, since his superhuman powers are controlled by his all-too-human thoughts and feelings. This series adapts the classic novel *Gladitor* by Philip Wylie—one of the core works that influences Siegel and Schuster's development of the concept that became known to the world as Superman.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Not only is this an adaptation of an SF work that offered the first realistic look at the concept of super-powers, it also marks the long-awaited series return of Silver Age legend *Russ Heath*, whose work has been seen all too rarely in recent years.

LULLABY! WISDOM SEEKER #1

MIKE S. MILLER (W) &
HECTOR SEVILLA (A)
(Image DEC041535 \$2.95)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

Five figures from children's literature form an unlikely team in order to wage war against whomever has unleashed an ominous magic force to alter their world. But are Jim Hawkins, Alice, Pinocchio, Little Red Riding Hood, and the Pied Piper prepared to confront evil of this magnitude?



WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Mike S. Miller & Hector Sevilla blend *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* and *Abadazad* for this all-ages series that knows how to invoke even the most jaded reader's sense of wonder.

NANCY DREW VOL 1

STEFAN PETRUCHA (W) &
SHO MURASE (A)
(NBM DEC042736 \$7.95)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

Nancy, Bess, and George are back in action in the first of a series of original graphic novels that capture the personalities and tone of the classic all-ages mystery series while updating them to modern times. In her kickoff adventure, Nancy becomes involved with a horror film based on the urban legend of the River Heights Demon... but is it only a legend?

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Millions of readers have thrilled to the Nancy Drew mysteries over the decades (did you know that Nancy's first exploits actually predate Superman's debut by almost a decade?)—and that means there's a millions of readers who'd love to rediscover Nancy and her friends in new adventures... and to share them with yet another generation of readers.



NIGHTWING #103

CHUCK DIXON & SCOTT BEATTY
(W) & SCOTT McDANIEL
& ANDY OWENS (A)
(DC DEC040238 \$2.25)

NIGHTWING #104

CHUCK DIXON & SCOTT BEATTY
(W) & SCOTT McDANIEL
& ANDY OWENS (A)
(DC DEC040239 \$2.25)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

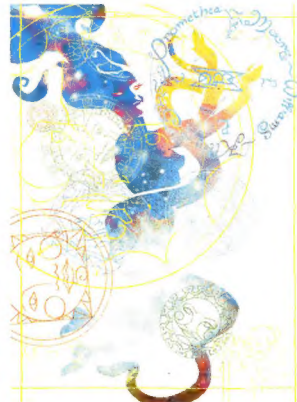
The previously-unexplored "Nightwing: Year One" continues as Dick Grayson tries to find a new direction for himself after being fired from his long-time role as Batman's partner in crime.



fighting, Dick's odyssey brings him into contact with Deadman, who has a surprising link to the circus where Dick grew up—and eventually it'll bring him face to face with Jason Todd, his ill-fated replacement in the red-yellow-and-green costume.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Chuck Dixon & Scott McDaniel, the team responsible for launching Nightwing's solo series in the 90's, reunites (with the able assistance of Scott Beatty & Andy Owens) to fill in the missing pieces of Nightwing's past... and to pave the way for the next phase in his heroic existence.



PROMETHEA #32

ALAN MOORE (W) &
J.H. WILLIAMS III (A)
(ABC/DC DEC040320 \$3.95)

PROMETHEA VARIANT EDITION #32

ALAN MOORE (W) &
J.H. WILLIAMS III (A)
(ABC/DC DEC040321 \$49.95)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

It's the end of the most boldly experimental of all the ABC titles, so Alan Moore & J.H. Williams III are going out with a bang. This book invites readers to join Promethea on a trip through the magical cosmos—and the journey unfolds in a series of pages that combine to form a huge double-sided poster, offering yet another way to enjoy this unpredictable comic. Even better, the posters reveal images and details that you won't see in the individual-page format, making this a comic unlike any other. You can either dismantle your own copy, or you can splurge on the deluxe limited edition signed version that is presented as a



pair of 27" x 40" posters, complete with a forty-eight-page companion book that collects all of the groundbreaking covers for this series!

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Moore never ceases to amaze and surprise, as this uniquely-designed finale demonstrates.



RUNAWAYS #1

BRIAN K. VAUGHAN (W);
ADRIAN ALPHONA (A)
(Marvel DEC041736 \$2.99)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

The teenage children of super-villains return in a relaunch of the critically acclaimed series—and they're right in the middle of the action! Now that the evil Pride is out of the picture, there's a power struggle as virtually ever baddie in LA tries to fill the void... but the Runaways are determined to stop that from happening! But what part will the mysterious new team Excelsior play in the saga—and what well-known Marvel characters are a part of this team?

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Brian K. Vaughan brings the same blend of characterization and concept to this series that he does to his Vertigo series *Y—The Last Man*, making this one of the strongest team titles in the Marvel Universe.

SEVEN SOLDIERS #0

GRANT MORRISON (W);
J.H. WILLIAMS III (A)
(DC DEC040274 \$2.95; also available in a signed edition (DEC042590 \$19.99))

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

A monstrous menace threatens the world—and its hope for survival rests in the hands of seven unsuspecting heroes who are destined to become the Seven Soldiers who will save the world... even though they'll never even meet one another!



WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Grant Morrison unleashes the grandest adventure of his career with a massive thirty-part saga that'll comprise seven four-issue limited series and two bookend oneshots spanning more than a year. You'll see a veritable legion of super-heroes (no, not that Legion of Super-Heroes), all reinvented by one of comics' most fertile imaginations... and it all begins here!



SHANNA, THE SHE DEVIL #1

FRANK CHO (W/A)
(Marvel DEC041750 \$3.50; also available in a signed edition (DEC042585 \$19.99))

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

Shanna is back in jungle action in this series that has all the classic pulp-adventure mainstays—beautiful women, exotic jungle locales, prehistoric monsters, and Nazi science!

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Frank Cho, the creator of the brilliant *Liberty Meadows*, makes his Marvel writer-artist debut with this series that's been over a year in the making. If you've seen Cho's comic strip, you know that he can draw beautiful women—and if you've seen some of his Tarzan-inspired work, you know that he draws the most lush jungle adventures this side of that other Frank—Frazetta!



SUPERMAN #214

BRIAN AZZARELLO (W);
JIM LEE & SCOTT WILLIAMS (A)
(DC DEC040240 \$2.50; also available in a signed edition (DEC042588 \$19.99))

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

Think Superman's life has been problem-filled through the first ten installments of "For Tomorrow"? Just wait 'til you see how it can get even worse! While Superman confronts an old adversary, a dire plan unfolds... a plan that involves Superman's closest confidante.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

No one will want to miss out on the final installments of the most compelling mystery of Superman's career.

SUPERMAN BATMAN #18

JEFF LOE (W); CARLOS PACHECO & JESUS MERINO (A)
(DC DEC040245 \$2.95; also available in a signed edition (DEC042592 \$29.99))

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

Superman and Batman confront the super-villains who have ripped apart time as the battle to restore balance to the universe reaches a climax. But... (insert Shatner voice here) at what cost?

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

It looks like an Elseworlds story... but it's not! Loeb and Pacheco have turned the Superman-Batman heroic ideal on its head in this provocative series that explores Authority-esque themes without hiding behind heroic *roman à clef* alterations.



YOUNG AVENGERS #1

ALLAN HEINBERG (W);
JIM CHEUNG (A)
(Marvel DEC041734 \$2.99; also available in a signed edition (DEC042582 \$19.99))

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

They're teenagers, but they have the look (and the abilities) of some of Marvel's mightiest heroes? Who are they, where did they come from, and what is their purpose on forming the Young Avengers?

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Allan Heinberg, a veteran of teevee's teen melodrama *The O.C.*, tries his hand at superheroes with this quirky series that gives the Marvel Universe some teen titans of their own. Oh, for you art fans—wait 'til you see Jim Cheung's lavish lineup!

CHECK 'EM OUT: BOOKS YOU SHOULD BE READING

FIRESTORM #10

(DC DEC040256 \$2.50)

The original Firestorm's fate seemed sealed when he seemingly self-destructed in the pages of *Identity Crisis*. But if Firestorm is pure energy, then can he *really* be destroyed? Is it possible that Ronnie Raymond is back? And if he is, will he fall a second time at the hands of his old enemy Killer Frost?



TEEN TITANS #21

GEOFF JOHNS (W); MIKE MCKONE & MARLO ALQUIZA (A)
(DC DEC040277 \$2.50)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

In the aftermath of *Identity Crisis*, Doctor Light wants to reclaim his reputation—and he's ready to take on the Titans to do it! But the Titans are about to get some surprising help in the form of two young heroes... the new Hawk and Dove!

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

A tie-in to the best-selling series of 2004 and the introduction of a revamped version of classic *Steve Ditko* creations? What more do you want?!

VIMANARAMA #1

GRANT MORRISON (W);
PHILIP BONG (A)
(Vertigo/DC DEC040337 \$2.95)

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

A nineteen-year-old British-Asian man has trouble accepting his parent's emphasis of cultural traditions—traditions that include an arranged marriage. Thankfully, the girl he's supposed to wed is beautiful and vivacious—but she's also the object of affection for a fifteen thousand year old Indian superman who may be humanity's only hope against a sea of supernatural troubles that the young man has unleashed upon the world.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Get to know a very different side of Grant Morrison with this unpredictable Indian-influenced epic saga that encourages readers to Make Mine Mahabharata!

KNIGHTS OF THE DINNER TABLE #100

(Kensler & Co. DEC042705 \$7.99)

The longest-running gaming humor book reaches the century mark—and to celebrate, *Jolly Blackburn* and crew are giving you twice the fun in a special double-sized issue. If you've never sampled this insightfully funny comic, here's a perfect way to find out what you've been missing!

LITTLE STAR #1

(Oni DEC042749 \$2.99)

Andi Watson, one of comics' best human interest storytellers, takes a look at fatherhood in this story of Simon Adams, a dad who's totally involved in his infant son's life... to the detriment of almost every other aspect of his own existence!

TWILIGHT EXPERIMENT #1

(ABC/DC DEC040316 \$2.95)

Justin Cray & Jimmy Palmiotti, the writing team responsible for the brilliant *21 Down*, reunite with artist *Juan Santacruz* for a six-issue SF tale that explores themes of heroism and loss. Decades ago,



a group of volunteers sacrificed themselves in an effort to save the world from an impending cosmic event. Unfortunately, they failed... but their children are determined to carry on in their parents' footsteps.

COLLECTED COOL! FEBRUARY'S BEST REPRINT VOLUMES

ALL-STAR ARCHIVES VOL 11 HC

(DC DEC040249 \$49.95)

This extra-length final *JSA Archives* volumes reprints *All-Star Comics* #50-57, featuring the last Golden Age JSA tales. It's the end of an era—but who would have thought that we would have the opportunity to relive that entire era almost sixty years later, thanks to DC's stellar Archives series?



DONALD DUCK & FRIENDS #325

(Gemstone DEC042636 \$2.95)

One of *Carl Barks'* most beloved and legendary tales, "Lost in the Andes," is reprinted in its entirety in this issue. Give it a try and find out why Barks is considered the Duck man by comic book fans the world 'round.



FRANK MILLER'S SIN CITY: THAT YELLOW BASTARD ZND TP

(Dark Horse DEC040037 \$17.00)

FRANK MILLER'S SIN CITY: THE BIG FAT KILL ZND ED TP

(Dark Horse DEC040036 \$17.00)

Frank Miller's noir-extremist tales return to comic shops just in time to coincide with the debut of the *Sin City* film by Miller & Robert Rodriguez. Be sure to check out the pulp-evocative smaller-sized editions redesigned by Chip Kidd.

FREAK SHOW HC

(Image DEC041527 \$12.95; also available in a signed edition (DEC041528 \$24.95))

64-page hardcover collection of the long-out-of-print horror classic by *Bruce Jones* & *Bernie Wrightson*, supplemented by three additional short stories.

SKIZZ TP

(2000AD/DC DEC040301 \$14.95)

Relive one of legendary writer Alan Moore's early triumphs with this new edition of his science-fiction classic, featuring art by frequent Moore collaborator *Jim Baikie*. An unassuming alien translator is stranded on Earth, where he must rely on a Birmingham schoolgirl to protect him from the government until he can find a way to return to his home in Tau Ceti.

STEVE DITKO READER VOL 3 TP

(Pure Imagination DEC042763 \$25.00)

Shot from British proofs, this book offers 160 pages of Ditko's finest work for Charlton, including horror, science fiction and western stories. These Ditko tales stand right alongside his pre-hero work for Marvel as some of the finest short tales of his career.

SUPERMAN BATMAN! SUPERGIRL HC

(DC DEC040246 \$19.95; also available in a signed edition (DEC042591 \$89.99))

Hardcover compilation of Jeph Loeb & Michael Turner's *Superman/Batman* #8-13, the storyline that introduces the new Supergirl. Grab it now, just in time for her return in next month's *Superman/Batman*!

READ ALL ABOUT IT! MUST-HAVE ADDITIONS TO YOUR REFERENCE LIBRARY

ALTER EGO #45

(TwoMorrows DEC042992 \$5.95)

This issue features *Creig Flessel*, *Bert Christman*, and *The Golden Age Sandman*, as well as Pulitzer Prize winner *Michael Chabon*, who discusses the Golden Age influences for his *Kavalier and Clay*.

THE DICK AYERS STORY AN ILLUSTRATED AUTOBIOGRAPHY VOL 1

(Mecca DEC042719 \$17.95)

First of three volumes chronicling *Dick Ayers'* comics career. The early career of this founding member of the Marvel bullpen is spotlighted.

ROSEN LIBRARY OF GRAPHIC NOVELISTS— ART SPIEGELMAN

(Rosen DEC042778 \$23.95)

ROSEN LIBRARY OF GRAPHIC NOVELISTS— BRYAN TALBOT

(Rosen DEC042780 \$23.95)

ROSEN LIBRARY OF GRAPHIC NOVELISTS— COLLEEN DORAN

(Rosen DEC042779 \$23.95)

ROSEN LIBRARY OF GRAPHIC NOVELISTS— JOE SACCO

(Rosen DEC042781 \$23.95)

ROSEN LIBRARY OF GRAPHIC NOVELISTS— NEIL GAIMAN

(Rosen DEC042777 \$23.95)

ROSEN LIBRARY OF GRAPHIC NOVELISTS— WILL EISNER

(Rosen DEC042782 \$23.95)

A relative newcomer to the comics field debuts a new series looking at the life and work of popular graphic novelists. The Eisner volume offers a particularly timely reminder of this giant's immeasurable contributions to the field of comics in a career that spanned seven decades.

HOT COMMODITIES! FEBRUARY'S HOTTEST MERCHANDISING/COLLECTIBLES

BATMAN BLACK AND WHITE SERIES ORIGINAL MINI STATUE

(DC Direct AUG040466 \$45.00)

Designed by *Eduardo Risso*; sculpted by *Tony Cipriano*. The true essence of a complex hero is captured in this black-and-white-and-grayscale sculpture inspired by the *Batman: Black & White* miniseries.



BATMAN UTILITY BELT REPLICA

(DC Direct JUN041124 \$350.00)

Full-sized replica of the most famous belt in comic book history. Okay, it's probably not going to fit you—it's a size 44, so if it does fit you, you ain't Batman—but it's still a pretty nifty display item that can serve as the crowning element of any Batman display!

JUSTICE LEAGUE ALEX ROSS SERIES 1 BIZARRO ACTION FIGURE

(DC Direct AUG040473 \$19.99)

JUSTICE LEAGUE ALEX ROSS SERIES 1 SUPERMAN ACTION FIGURE

(DC Direct AUG040472 \$19.99)

JUSTICE LEAGUE ALEX ROSS SERIES 1 FLASH ACTION FIGURE

(DC Direct AUG040474 \$19.99)

JUSTICE LEAGUE ALEX ROSS SERIES 1 SINISTRO ACTION FIGURE

(DC Direct AUG040475 \$19.99)

Tim Bruckner's superlative sculpting brings *Alex Ross's* take on the Justice League into the third dimension in the first of what we all hope will be a long-running series of JLA action figures.

KINGDOM COME PLANET KRYPTON GREEN LANTERN REPLICA RING SET

(DC Direct AUG040469 \$99.95)

The second of three must-have prop replicas in this month's Hot Picks list is also the first item in DC's new line of *Kingdom Come: Planet Krypton* gallery pieces! This limited-edition set features five Power Ring replicas, one for each of the following Green Lanterns: *Hal Jordan*, *Sinestro*, *Kyle Rayner*, *Alan Scott* and *Power Ring of the Crime Syndicate*. Each ring is cast in fine pewter with colored (green and gold) oxleyne coatings. Two of the rings will have green stones inserted into the face, and one of the rings will have pearl-epoxy inserted into the face.

MIRACLEMAN BY NEIL GAIMAN STATUE

(Bowen NOV043642 \$140.00)

Forget that earlier contorted revisionist statue that claimed to present an image of *Miracleman*. This Bowen Designs sculpt presents a the real deal as we all know and love him—and this is the version that we suspect readers will have a chance to see in comics form once again later this year!

MIRROR MASK PVC SET ONE

(Dark Horse NOV040063 \$14.99)

MIRROR MASK PVC SET TWO

(Dark Horse NOV040064 \$14.99)

MIRROR MASK PVC SET THREE

(Dark Horse JAN050110 \$14.99)

Each set features three PCV figures inspired by the upcoming *Neil Gaiman-Dave McKean-Jim Henson Company* film that blends computer graphics and live action to capture the look of McKean's inimitable art.

X-MEN! CEREBRO HELMET REPLICA

(Diamond Select OCT042247 \$175.00)

The third prop item of the month is a replica of the helmet that Professor Xavier donned when he was on a mental quest for new mutants. Alas, it doesn't work—but it's still a great addition to your collection!

He who laughs first... **THE DARK KNIGHT** vs. **THE JOKER**, FOR THE FIRST TIME!

BATMAN

**THE
MAN
WHO
LAUGHS**

A 64-page
Prestige Format
One-Shot

Written by
ED BRUBAKER

Art and cover by
DOUG MAHNKE

ON SALE IN FEBRUARY

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